

## DePaul Center for Urban Education Research Base

### Think Aloud Strategy

Core Element	Connections Structure	Basis in Research	Relevant Research
Teachers and students use think aloud strategy for monitoring and improving comprehension.	Teachers read aloud/think out loud to students to explain strategies you use as you read. Students think out loud to show each other how to understand what is read.	Think aloud strategy or the “sharing the reading secrets” is an important instructional scaffold for teaching higher-level cognitive strategies.	Anderson, 1991. Schoenfeld, 1985. Rosenshine and Meister, 1992. Baumann, Seifert-Kessell, and Jones, 1992. Baumann, Jones, and Seifert-Kessell

The following research supports the emphasis on the use of graphic organizers:

Another scaffold, similar to modeling, is “thinking aloud.” Anderson (1991) provides illustrations of think-alouds for several cognitive strategies in reading: for clarifying difficult statements or concepts; for summarizing important information; and for thinking ahead. In a mathematics study by Schoenfeld (1985), the teacher thought aloud as he went through the steps in solving mathematical problems. He also identified and labeled the problem-solving procedures he was using (for example, making diagrams, breaking the problem into parts). As individual students accepted more responsibility in the completion of a task, they often modeled and thought aloud for their less capable classmates. Thinking aloud by the teacher and more capable students provided novice learners with a way to observe “expert thinking” usually hidden from the student (p. 26)

B. Rosenshine and C. Meister, “The Use of Scaffolds for Teaching Higher Level Cognitive Strategies”, Educational Leadership, April 1992

Think alouds require a reader to stop periodically, reflect on how a text is being processed and understood, and relate orally what reading strategies are being employed. We conducted a study of fourth-grade students (Baumann, Seifert-Kessell, & Jones, 1992) to determine if thinking aloud is an effective technique for helping students learn to monitor their comprehension. Results from a series of quantitative assessments and in-depth, individual student interviews led us to the conclusion that think-aloud instruction was highly effective in helping students acquire a broad range of strategies to enhance understanding of text and to deal with comprehension difficulties (p. 186). We found from our research that using think alouds works well for helping students develop an ability to monitor their reading comprehension and to employ fix-up strategies when they detect

comprehension difficulties. We also recommend that students participate in the social construction of think alouds, either as part of the lessons or within lessons for which students have assumed responsibility for creating and directing (p. 192).

J. F. Baumann, L. A. Jones, and N. Seifert-Kessell, "Using Think Alouds to Enhance Children's Comprehension Monitoring Abilities", The Reading Teacher 47(3), November 1993